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COMING NEXT WEEK:
FIRST COD

About the Cover—

L.I.F. publisher Rich Reina (left) and editor Scott Simons with four striped bass caught this fall at Montauk on Ava diamond jigs and De-May-O Jigs. The fish ranged from 25 to 28 pounds.

Phot by Ian Hunt, Star Island Yacht Club

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HYPOTHERMIA CONFERENCE

Of the fifteen yachtsmen who died in the Irish Sea during the ill-fated Fastnet Yacht Race last summer, hypothermia was directly responsible for the death of five, and may have been a contributing factor in the death of the other ten.

This will be one of many hypothermia-related issues discussed by an international gathering of hypothermia experts at the second annual hypothermia conference and workshop to be held on the campus of the University of Rhode Island, January 23-27, 1980.

The conference was originally scheduled to run from January 9-13, but a rescheduling of the university's academic calendar necessitated the change.

Hypothermia is the cooling of the internal body temperature. A contributing cause of death in cold-water drownings, it has also been linked to the wintertime deaths of elderly persons and small children, and is a threat to mountain climbers and hikers who may be exposed to low-air temperatures for prolonged periods of time.

The focus of the conference will be hypothermia research and training in the treatment of the hypothermia victim.

According to John Bernhartsen of the U.S. Coast Guard's Office of Boating Safety, co-sponsor of the conference and workshop, "not enough people are aware of the dangers of hypothermia nor how to treat a hypothermia victim.

"For example, there is an increasing number of cases in which people who were submerged in cold water for several minutes and though dead, were successfully revived," Berhartsen said. "A child in Ohio was floating face down in a cold river for over ten minutes before being recovered and revived with no apparent adverse effects. A boy in Michigan was revived after being trapped in an ice-covered pond for 38 minutes."

From January 23 to 25 participants from medical and nursing fields, university research, government service and rescue organizations will meet to hear the latest results of research into hypothermia.

The workshop will start on the afternoon of January 25 and last through the 27th. At the workshop, hypothermia experts will train instructors and educators in hypothermia prevention and treatment. Enrollment in the workshop is limited to 200 people.

In addition to the U.S. Coast Guard, other organizations co-sponsoring the conference and workshop are the National Sea Grant Program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Red Cross, the University of Rhode Island, the Undersea Medical Society, the Rhode Island Boating Council and the Underwater Society of America.

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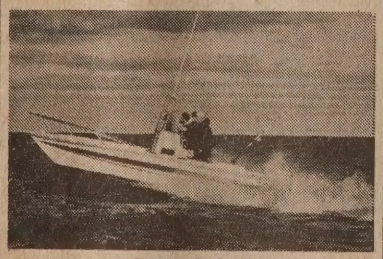
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The Fighting Chair

with Scott Simons

Army Corps & New Jersey Refuse to Stop Dredging of Romer Shoals

Last week representatives of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation met with officials of the state of New Jersey and the Army Corps of Engineers concerning the N.J. Turnpike Authority's plans for dredging more than two-million cubic yards of material from the area known as Romer Shoals in the New York Bight. We understand that the fill is to be used for some access roads to Newark Airport that the N.J.T.A. is in the process of constructing. The plans call for dredging Romer Shoals to a depth of minus forty-five feet and will completely destroy the sportfishing at this magnificent bottom formation. On the basis that the destruction of Romer Shoals would be detrimental to and cause hardship for the recreational sportfishing industry, and may also potentially increase erosion of the Staten Island shoreline, the D.E.C. asked the Army Corps to rescind the permit. This the Corps refused to do, and New Jersey refused to voluntarily stop the project.

As a result of these refusals, we have learned that the following actions are presently under consideration: *The Attorney General of the State of New York* may seek an injunction to halt the project; *The American Littoral Society* has officially asked the Army Corps to delay the project while it gathers data for a possible injunction to stop the dredging on the grounds that an Environmental Impact Statement should have been prepared before the permit was granted; the *Natural Resources Protective Association of Staten Island*, headed by Lou Figuerelli, is in the process of filing a class action suit against the State of New Jersey to stop the dredging. (This private group recently won a battle with the D.E.C. over bunker boats illegally fishing in Staten Island, passing a new law in the process.) The *New York Sportfishing Council* has contacted U.S. Congressman Jerry Ambro, a member of the House Committe on Science & Technology, who has led the fight against the dumping in Long Island Sound; and *The Long Island Fisherman* is asking Senator Patrick Moynihan, Congressman Norman F. Lent, Congressman William Carney and Congressman John Murphy of the House Committee on *Merchant Marine & Fisheries* to look into the matter. We have also asked the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council to make a protest.

When the proposed dredging of Romer Shoals first became public knowledge, there were several unanswered questions. Although these questions are still unanswered, after many phone calls interviewing various officials, we are finally beginning to see through the bureaucratic haze—or, if you will, smokescreen. The two questions of primary importance were: Why hadn't anyone found out about this proposed project in the public hearing stage, *before* the permit was granted, and why wasn't an Environmental Impact Statement prepared? Not surprisingly, the answer to both these questions is complicated due to the bureaucracy involved—and probably illegal. First off, the application was made in New Jersey, and it is understandable that N.Y. State officials don't monitor permit applications for projects in New Jersey as closely as they do those in our own state. To compound the problem, the area wasn't identified by its common name of Romer Shoals, and it appears that no one realized where the dredging was to take place. So New York State comes up clean on this one, in our opinion. But how, pray tell, did the proposal ever get through New Jersey without anyone finding out about it and requesting a public hearing to protest the project? Good question, and New Jersey hasn't been able to come up with any answers to date. These days it is quite difficult to undertake such an environmentally unsound project without being bombarded with protests from conservation groups and other state and federal agencies. So New Jersey found a way to get around this sticky problem with a little side-stepping maneuver: they didn't apply for a permit! Oh sure, they had a permit all right—one that had been granted in 1973, never acted upon and only gathering dust on a shelf somewhere in the Garden State. So it was a simple matter to just

dust it off and have the Army Corps renew it without raising a lot of attention. The fact that this is an old permit is very important, because environmental laws since 1973 have been tightened up considerably in the interim and there is much more public awareness of what has been happening to our environment. A permit granted easily in 1973 would be much more difficult to obtain in 1979, and permits only being renewed do not receive the same scrutiny as a new permit application.

As a result of the forgoing, no one was aware of the permit application by New Jersey to dredge Romer Shoals, so there were no objections to the renewal of the permit application. So the Army Corps of Engineers made what's known as a "Negative Declaration". This meant that because no one had any objections, there was no need to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement—*despite the fact that both the Army Corps of Engineers and the State of New Jersey had evidence available to them that the dredging at Romer Shoals would have an adverse effect and impact on the environment.* It is therefore our contention that the State of New Jersey had fraudulently applied for this permit and the Army Corps of Engineer subsequently granted the permit illegally.

Sportfishermen of both New York and New Jersey cannot allow the proposed dredging of Romer Shoals to take place. Much of the marine habitat in the New York Bight has already been destroyed by dumping, dredging, pollution and sewage—we cannot afford to lose another acre of bottom, much less such a large natural fish habitat such as Romer Shoals. Today it is Romer—tomorrow it could just as easily be the Outer Banks of Patchogue, the Cholera Banks, the Cartwright Grounds or the bottom off Eaton's Neck. So sportfishermen all over the Island have a stake in the future of Romer Shoals, regardless of where they fish.

At this late date there is only one person that can stop this project immediately without the necessity of a long battle through the courts—Brendan T. Byrne, Governor of New Jersey. And we believe that he will, if he has enough public pressure put on him. So L.I.F., along with our sister publication, *The New Jersey Fisherman*, are asking our readers write Governor Bryne in protest. Fishing clubs and organizations, boat captains and other businesses that are also dependent on marine recreational fishing are also urged to write. To make things easier for you, we have had a specially printed postcard inserted into the centerfold of this issue: just cut it out, fill in your name and address, stamp it and put it in the mail. If enough sportfishermen are willing to take two minutes of their time and fifteen-cents, we're sure that Governor Byrne will order the project halted. Remember, it doesn't matter where you do your fishing—we all have a stake in this. But don't delay—time is a critical factor because it is our understanding that the dredge that has been contracted for the project is on its way north from Florida, and the dredging will commence as soon as it arrives. So mail that post card today! If you want more postcards for friends to fill out, just call *The Fisherman* at (516) 725-4200 and we'll mail them to you the same day.

Scott F. Simons

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Emphasis throughout the year will be on teaching youngsters to fish, but retailers of fishing tackle also will be urged to stage clinics and demonstrations on such subjects as bait and fly casting; fly tying, and lure retrieval techniques before, during and after the National Fishing Week period.

Opportunities will be sought for the involvement of Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops in sport fishing and in wilderness preservation and fishery development. Community youth program committees will be asked to incorporate fishing into summer recreation plans. In addition to the retailer, AFTMA hopes to involve fishing clubs, fishing-related organizations (such as Trout Unlimited), its own National Youth Fishing Program and the media in a unified effort to make sport fishing in 1980 a family affair.

WORLD FISHING EXPO

It's back! The World Fishing and Outdoor Exposition, which attracted thousands of area sportsmen to the Rockland Community College Field House in Suffern, New York, for the past two years, has just announced show dates for 1980.

The third annual World Fishing and Outdoor Exposition will be from February 27 through March 2, and will be bigger than ever, according to Paul Fuller, Show Director. Fuller reports that thirty per cent more exhibitors have already signed up, with increases in almost every category. The largest group, as always, will be the tackle manufacturers, with more than fifty major companies exhibiting. In fact, Fuller expects the fishing tackle displays to be the largest exhibit of fishing tackle at any public show in eastern America.

With aisle after aisle of exhibits, covering almost two entire acres, sportsmen will find dozens of additional exhits to whet their appetites: hunting gear, camps and lodges, guides, boats, motors, retailers and hunting and fishing clubs will all be there.

And—as with previous shows (and unique to this one, we might add), numerous clinics conducted by national and local authorities will be scheduled to help sharpen your outdoor skills.

It will all be available: the latest in fishing tackle, reels, rods, baits, line and lures, fishing boats and motors, expert guides and outfitters, lodges, camps, hunting equipment, sportsmen's accessories, special bargains on that particular piece of equipment you've been promising yourself, and a chance to talk fishing and hunting with the "pros" who will be there to help you gain the most pleasure for your times in the outdoors.

For more information, contact the show management at World Fishing & Outdoor Exposition, P. O. Box 364, Portsmouth, N.H. 03801.

FISHING NOT PERMITTED IN TRAFFIC LANES

Captain R. Barry Eldridge, U.S. Coast Guard, Captain of the Port, Boston, announced during the recent investigation of the collision between the T/V EXXON CHESTER and the M/V REGAL SWORD, it was determined that, shortly before the collision, both vessels had to alter course to avoid fishing vessels in the Boston Harbor Traffic Lane. On another occasion, the operator of a fishing vessel reported that a tanker had nearly run him down, and had destroyed some of his gear. The reported position of the incident was found to be within the Boston Harbor Traffic Lane.

Rule 10(e) of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (72 COLREGS) permits vessels to engage in fishing in a traffic separation zone. However, fishing is not permitted in a traffic lane. Additionally, Rule 10(i) requires that "a vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any vessel following a traffic lane."

All vessels not following the traffic lane are strongly urged to avoid the entire traffic separation scheme by as wide a margin as possible.

If you feel it is necessary to fish within the separation zone (remember, fishing in the traffic lane is prohibited), extreme caution must be exercised while crossing the traffic lane and while fishing in the separation zone, to ensure that you do not impede the passage of any vessel following the traffic lane. If your charts do not show the traffic lanes or are old charts, you should obtain a new edition covering the areas being fished.

CLUB NEWS

NEW OFFICERS FOR G.S.B.M.S.

The annual meeting of the Great South Beach Mobile Sportfishermen was held November 15, 1979 and the following have been elected to office for 1980:

President—George Ehmann
1st Vice-Pres.—Harold Babcock
2nd Vice Pres.—Edward Seeley
Secretary—Terry Ehmann
Treasurer—Charles Rose

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Attention L.I.F. Readers:
SUBSCRIPTION RATE TO GO UP JAN. 1st

"One of the more difficult facets of the editor's job is that he is occasionally required to disseminate bad news to the readers of the publication."

That was the opening line of the announcement we made the last time we were forced to raise our subscription rates. In these inflationary times when virtually all commodities have been skyrocketing in price, we can identify with the feeling many may have when they read this news—we can picture a wind-chilled surf fisherman on the beach casting for "just one more bass," or a numb-fingered flounder fisherman sitting in a skiff, mumbling incoherently *"et tu, Brute?"* But with inflation this year in the neighborhood of 13 to 15% annually, we have no choice but to raise our subscription, newsstand and advertising rates in order to remain an economically viable enterprise.

Therefore, as much as we regret it, we have no alternative. Effective with the first issue of January 1980, the cover price of L.I.F. will be 60-cents. The new subscription rates will be: one-year, $13; two-years, $24; and three-years, $33. In the past we have afforded our readers the opportunity to take out a new subscription, or extend their present subscription, for as many years as they wished before the new prices came into effect. Once again we will hold to our past policy and allow unlimited renewals. Any subscription received in our offices postmarked before midnight, December 31st, 1979 will be honored at the old rates, no matter how many years the subscription is for.

It doesn't make a difference how long your present subscription has to run—however long you renew for now will simply be added on to the end of your present subscription. By renewing early you will also be entitled to receive the free 100-yard spool of Stren Line we are offering as a premium. As a regular subscriber you will also be entitled to classified ads at half-price, a 20% discount on all books in *The Fisherman's Library,* use of the *Inflation Fighter Discount Coupons* we run all summer, and a host of other subscriber-oriented programs we have planning for 1980.

The last time we raised our rates and made this offer, our mailroom got snowed under with the avalanche of renewal orders. To make the processing easier and to eliminate errors, we ask that you use the form below to renew your subscription, and *please* attach a copy of the mailing label from a current issue. New subscribers should fill out the subscription blank on page 32 of this issue. If you don't want to cut up your magazine, just write the info on a piece of paper and tape the mailing label to it.

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Pass It On...

N.Y. SPORTFISHING COUNCIL SOLUTION FOR ROMER SHOAL

Dear Congressman Ambro: Thank you for your letter of October 19, 1979, and I further wish to thank you for giving our organization the opportunity to state our position on Long Island Sound dumping. It was gratifying to find a Congressional Hearing was investigating this procedure, particularly since we had sent petitions, signed by thousands, against this operation to many legislators, the President included, and received very minute interest in response.

Recently another undertaking by the Army Corps of Engineers came to our attention, which is indicative of the concern the Corps has for the fishing fraternity. A photocopy of an article written by Scott Simons, Managing Editor of The Long Island Fisherman (whose associate Editor, Dr. Muller, also gave testimony at the Hearing) is enclosed, which gives you all the particulars. This article appeared in the New York Daily News on Friday, October 26, 1979.

Congressman Ambro, there is a very important point about both these operations I wish to bring to the attention of your committee. If New Jersey needs landfill for road construction, then wouldn't it be more economical to barge the dredge material from Stamford and New Haven than to start another separate dredging operation. I do not propose to have accurate figures on each independent procedure, but it seems to be reasonable that eliminating one dredging operation would offset any additional costs in transportation incurred by our proposal.

Another important consideration is the ecological soundness of this alternative to Sound dumping. This highly toxic material should have no effect when used as a basis for road construction.

Since, as always, this operaiton came to our attention too late to prevent its inception, we would appreciate your immediate attention to prevent the entire extinction of a prime fish sanctuary, that has never been considered a hazard to navigation. Sincerely, **George Gerhold, President, N.Y. Sportfishing Council**

NATIONAL FISHING WEEK TO PROMOTE "TAKE A CHILD FISHING" THEME

In the belief that the sport of fishing brings families closer together, the American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association has adopted "Take a Child Fishing" as the theme for National Fishing

FISH TALK

with Dr. William A. Muller

DECEMBER BOTTOM FISHING

OUTLOOK GOOD! For many of us, the fishing season comes to a sad end with the last flounder of November. However, some bottom fishermen can look forward to the winter months for some of the best fishing for ground fish. Of course, cod head the list of sought-after species; but there are also ling, whiting, and blackfish to whet the appetite. What is the outlook for this winter season? That's the topic of today's column, and we'll try to run it down species by species, and area by area.

COD. All signs point to a good season for cod. At Montauk, the head boats have been enjoying good codfishing on and off since the ice broke last winter. Many of the fish are small, but there are still enough "hangers" around to keep the customers happy. At Montauk, the skippers look for the fishing to improve as the water temperature drops and the boats should be able to find fish inshore, thus negating the need for long runs to offshore ledges and wrecks. Although there isn't usually too much codfishing going on in Long Island Sound, the extreme eastern reaches of the Sound do hold schools of cod in November and December. Local skippers work the waters slightly to the west of Orient Point. There is very little fishing out along the northern fork of Long Island; so it is hard, if not impossible, to predict the quality of the fishing.

ALONG THE SOUTH SHORE! Although there seems to be good amounts of cod available and the Russian fleets will not harass the recreational fishermen, the quality of the South Shore run of fish is so dependent upon the weather as to make any kind of prediction impossible. The best action seems to coincide with steadily dropping temperatures—a phenomena that has been rare in recent years. Last year, we picked up on the early good showing of fish and predicted a good run that never really materialized. The weather became schizophrenic in mid-December and the fishing suffered. The abundant dogfish are always a nuisance to the codfishing and there is no way to predict how much of a problem they will be until they arrive. The "doggies" move inshore for the spawning ritual and like all fishes, they have ups and downs of abundance. There is no doubt that lots of "doggies" on the codfish ground intimidates the codfish—or at least prohibits them from actively taking baits. Too bad it doesn't work the other way! One more word of advice. Watch out for migrating big blues in the early part of the season. These fish often hang on well into December and are especially likely around deep water wrecks. If they are present, they can cost you a lot of tackle and time. If the blues are around, there are two choices: first, switch to wire leaders and diamond jigs, or second—move.

WHITING! Although whiting (silver hake) have not been as abundant as we would have hoped for, based upon the showing of fish in 1975 and 1976, the fishing has nonetheless remained very good. We suspect that heavy foreign catches of several excellent year classes took quite a bit out of what would have been about six or seven years of tremendous fishing. Based upon the abundance of the species in 1976, we should have had fish up against the beach and possibly in some harbors, like the old days when you could walk along the South Shore beaches on a calm, cool night and pick them up. At Montauk, the whiting fishing should be good to excellent. In recent years, there have been good runs of fish at Culloden Point with one to three pound fish taken there in the day and "baseball bats" of four and five pounds caught at night. There is no reason to believe that there will not be a repeat of this fine fishing.

NEW YORK BIGHT! Similarly, good whiting fishing has been the order of the day in New York Bight and "bag full" catch descriptions are almost an everyday occurrence during the winter season. In fact, the whiting and ling have been mainstays, what with the cod uncooperative at times. Private skippers should follow the lead of party boat captains. Try for cod and then switch over quickly if the signs point to a bad codfish day. In that way, you should have plenty of action and a full fish box. We have every reason to believe that the whiting will once again be abundant and hungry in the ocean off the South Shore west end.

LING! This species also seems to have staged a big comeback in recent years, and the fishing for them has been outstanding. Earlier this year, we made a trip to Montauk in search of sea bass and found plenty of ling wherever we dropped the hook. Ling have showed up in the backwaters of Jones Inlet and Fire Island Inlet, too. I have seen young ling casually feeding around the piers behind Jones Beach in the summer. That's a sure sign that they are plentiful. Surf fishermen have also been running into schools of ling along the beaches when fishing baits in spring and fall. Few boats at Montauk fish for ling specifically, although they will be caught along with cod and whiting on most trips. Along the west end of the South Shore, party boats do concentrate on the ling. We expect another very good year in New York Bight for ling.

BLACKFISH. Most fishermen associate blackfish with May and November and, of course, this is peak season inshore. However, blackfish move out of the shallows in late fall when water temperatures become a little too cold for comfort. Tagging studies have shown that these fish move out into the ocean and find a winter home on wrecks and ocean rock piles or reefs. Giant "bulldog" blackfish are an everyday event on wreck trips in winter. These fish can easily approach ten or more pounds. At Montauk, blackfish may be even more common on some grounds such as Cartwright and around Block Island. To the west, blacks will not usually be caught on open bottom where the cod often roam; but they will be taken on high ground areas of New York Bight and the wrecks.

CAN WE CATCH MORE BLACKFISH? The wintertime bottom fisherman is often faced with a genuine dilemma. Since cod, hake, ling, blacks, and flounder often gather on the same piece of bottom, it is impossible to gear up for a specific species, although most anglers select both tackle and bait on the desire to catch cod. The usual strategy calls for large hooks (5/0, or more), clam baits, and a heavy rod. Blackfish will take a clam bait, but as we know, they prefer crabs—especially the green crab and the hermit! If there aren't too many cod around, the fisherman may elect to try and catch

more blackfish. Okay. If that's your desire, it may well pay to bring along a few items on your trip. A dozen Virginia blackfish style hooks, for example, since it is not every party boat that will have them for sale on board. The same holds true for crab baits. Perhaps a few dozen green crabs would be a worthwhile investment. Certainly, the cod have no objection to the tasty crustacean, so it will be hard to lose much by doing so. You also might want to bring along a slightly lighter rod and reel which will permit you to get more out of the battle. No problem with the whiting and ling. Both species aren't the least bit fussy (usually) about what they eat, and clams will be good enough.

SNOWSHOE FLOUNDER. It isn't nearly as likely that you'll catch snowshoe flounders along the western South Shore as at Montauk. The big flats move into the Block Island grounds in late fall and a smattering of four and five pounders are usually taken. There aren't really enough of these fish, even at Montauk, to warrant any special effort for them. However, be alert to the possibility.

A WORD FOR THE INSHORE FISHERMAN. Don't be too quick to give up your flounder fishing in the bays. Indeed, if you can steal a nice day or tolerate Mother Nature's climatic abuses, there are still flounder to be caught late in the year. Almost every bay will have some and they seem to get bigger and fatter as the fall comes to a close. Switch to worm baits in the late fall for more fish. Heavy chumming is also a very good idea since, as the water temperatures drop, the fish gradually become more and more sluggish.

ABOUT THE WEATHER! This year's crop of crystal ball gazers have come up with predictions that range from milder than usual, to cold with lots of snow. I think that for the first time in about a decade (maybe more), we will see that gradual drop in temperatures that is so conducive to good fishing. However, there is little likelihood that we'll avoid the strong northwest winds that are typical of winter. The wind doesn't bother the bottom fish, of course, unless it blows a gale; but the biting cold sharpened by northwest winds has a way of discouraging fishermen. Based upon this GUESS about the fall and winter weather, I would think that the first solid showing of cod will occur right around the middle of November, although some skippers will scratch out a few as early as Election Day. When the "doggies" move in, the fishing will slacken; but I look for it to pick up again. Most of the fish should be of the five to twenty pound variety with hangers up to sixty pounds. Look for the first snow in early December, which may stop the fishermen from getting to the

(Continued on page 21.)

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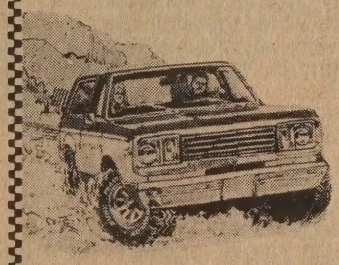

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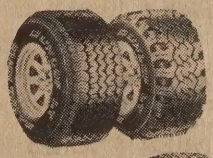

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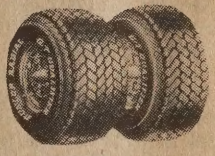

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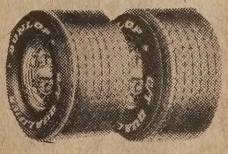

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Whenever people with similar interests gather together, the topic of conversation invariably will center on this common bond. When fishermen congregate, the rehash of past experiences and the discussion of tackle, methods, and lures can carry on for hours—much to the dismay of wives or non-fishing parties present. Of all the aspects of fishing debated during these exchanges, the key item which actually snares the fish, is not frequently mentioned. This is unfortunate, for very often the selection of the correct hook can make the difference between success or failure. Due to the rapidly increasing expenses incurred by manufacturers, the means to cut production costs is on the minds of the majority of businessmen. Unfortunately, this reduction in overhead often results in somewhat inferior products reaching the consumer. A principle area where this cost-cutting practice is most evident is when mass-produced lures are purchased from the tackle store. One area where this is apparent is in the lower grade hooks found on some of the more popular lures. The discriminating fisherman often chooses wisely in such substantial matters as rods and reels, but tends to overlook the minor details.

This deficiency is not so apparent in the larger size plugs, but when the smaller versions of favorite swimming plugs are needed to take big fish, the strength of the hook is of utmost importance. Before an angler indiscriminately starts to change hooks, care must be taken so that the action of the plug is not altered adversely.

When the treble hooks on five inch RedFin floating swimmers are replaced with the Eagle Claw #2, 4X strong cadmium hooks, the lure still performs up to its capabilities, while at the same time greatly reducing the danger of a hook straightening under the pressure of a large fish. On the other hand, when the trebles on a four inch Rebel floater are replaced with stainless 4X strong, size #6 Eagle Claw trebles, the weight of the more sturdy hook will alter the plug's action. One method used to reduce this added weight and still use stronger hooks, is to eliminate the middle hook, thereby allowing the plug to retain its buoyancy.

On many occasions, I find that the removal of this center hook eliminates the need to dislodge three hooks from fish, such as the striped bass, which tend to attack a lure from the front, which often causes the remaining hooks to be sunk into the side of the head. This practice is especially helpful when release of the fish unharmed is desired.

As implied before, the larger versions of these plugs are more capable of handling big fish under most conditions. If the proper drag is applied, then more of these hooks are bent and twisted out of shape by fishermen—not the fish. This occurs when undue leverage is applied in dislodging the plug from a deeply-hooked fish. In an emergency, bent hooks can be restored to their original shape with a pair of pliers; but each time a piece of metal is bent there is a reduction in the strength of that section.

In instances where blitz-type fishing on big bluefish is to be expected, extra hooks for the current hot plug can be carried on your person. A pair of pliers should be carried which will enable open-eyed hooks to be exchanged, while at the same time permit speedy removal of hooked fish and keep fingers a safe distance from razor sharp teeth.

The most popular lures for catching bluefish are popping plugs in daylight, and darters and bottle plugs after dark. Treble hooks are standard equipment on these plugs and, for the most part, do not need any modification for they work very well. In certain instances when the fish are extremely picky, the replacement of the rear treble hook on the darter with a bucktailed single hook will occasionally induce a strike when all else fails. In the opposite vein, tins such as the Hopkins, Kastmaster, and J-8s are usually equipped with single bucktailed hooks. As is the way of all fish, there are those occasions when they will prefer a bare hook and not one adorned with feathers or bucktail. Naturally, the dressing can be stripped from the hook, but it would be much cheaper to carry a few extra bare hooks with you.

Anyone who has caught bluefish in quantities is aware that after several blues are caught on dressed hooks, it does not take long before the wrapping is shredded and little trimming is left on the hook. If it is a day when the fish are particular in their feeding, an angler can be out of business in short order unless duplicate lures are carried. Solution: stow a few replacement hooks in your bag; it's easier than carting extra plugs and it will permit you to carry a greater selection of lures.

The grapevine last fall reported that Hopkins lures with a surgical tube lure in place of the tail hook was the hot item in the Westhampton Beach area. Although I tested this combination in several locations without success, I'm sure there was good reason for the report. Again, a few tubed hooks in various colors can be easily packed in a corner of your bag.

Aside from a hook being obviously bent out of shape or weakened by repeated straightening, rust is the other cause for the failure of a hook under stress. A light coating of rust is almost impossible to prevent on any ferrous metal used in the vicinity of saltwater. This will not noticeably reduce the strength of the metal, but when the hooks become pitted from long exposure to oxidation, they should be replaced. A light coating of oil would help preserve the metal, but the odor could repel the fish. When I carry spare hooks which have a tendency to rust, I coat them with Cod Liver Oil which protects the metal from corrosion and does not seem to have any detrimental effect in attracting fish.

When buying replacement hooks, significant savings can be had when larger quantities are purchased. Ask your local tackle dealer or you can order by mail if you know the sizes needed. Such mail order outfits as Midland Tackle Company or the Surfcaster, whose advertisements appear frequently in The Long Island Fisherman, have a wide selection of hooks at reduced prices.

Aside from the choice to be made in the size and type of hook, an angler should be aware that some books have permanently closed eyes. This type requires a split ring so that the hook can be attached to the lure. Other hooks are manufactured with an open eye which must be closed with a pair of pliers. The latter hooks can be used on lures not equipped with split rings. If a fisherman attempts to add split rings where they are not provided, caution must be used to determine if the extra weight does not adversely affect the action of the plug. Also, this lengthening of the reach of the hook should not allow the hooks to tangle one another.

One last item to keep in mind is that the size of the replacement hook should be identical to the original. Careful attention was given during the design of the lure, taking to consideration the weight factor and relative size of the lure itself. Any indiscriminate changes could alter the lure's action and render it useless.

It is obvious that sharp hooks will penetrate faster and deeper than a hook with a point that has been dulled. When game fish are smashing any lure thrown in their direction, this point is not so critical. During those occasions when the fish take a half-hearted swipe at your offering, a finely-honed hook can make a big difference. A person can tell if a hook is sharp by lightly drawing the point across a fingertip: if the point catches the skin, then you have a good chance of stealing a fish that shows mild interest in your plug. Any place where

(Continued on page 23.)

THE WINTER TUNA

BY FRED GUARDINEER

CODFISH USUALLY RUN MUCH LARGER THAN OTHER SPECIES CAUGHT BY FISHERMEN IN THEIR SEASONAL TRIPS AND SINCE THIS COLD WEATHER FISH CAN BE COMPARED IN SIZE TO THE SUMMER HORSE MACKEREL, IT IS OFTEN CALLED "*WINTER TUNA*". WHILE LACKING THE SPEED OF BLUES, TUNA OR STRIPERS. COD CAN MOVE LINE AGAINST A TIGHT DRAG AND DOUBLE HEADER "COWS" WILL MAKE AN IMPASSE!

WORLD RECORD
HOOK & LINE 98 LB. 12 OZ. TODAY'S AVERAGE 4-15 LBS. WITH 50-60 POUNDERS UNUSUAL.

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TYPICAL CODFISH RIG
ATTACHED TO 40 LB. TEST MONO FROM 7 FT. ROD WITH CONVENTIONAL 3-O SIZE REEL.

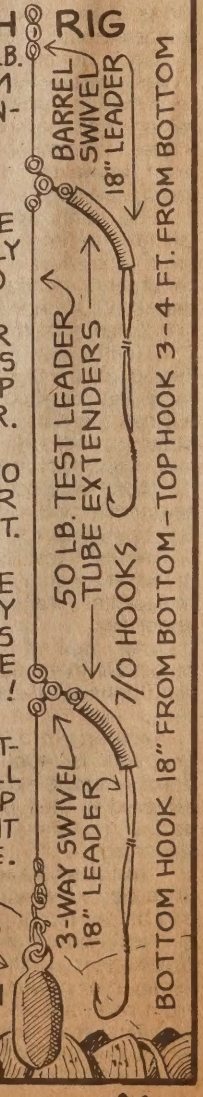
AFTER YOU LOSE IT YOU CAN QUICKLY RIG UP WITH A NO HARDWARE RIG USING DROPPER LOOPS FOR HOOKS AND AN END LOOP FOR THE SINKER.

USE ONE OR TWO WHOLE SKIMMER CLAMS FOR BAIT.

ON BOARD THERE WILL BE AS MANY DIFFERENT RODS & RIGS AS THERE ARE FISHERMEN!

AVOID SPINCASTERS AS THEY WILL TANGLE YOU ALL UP WITH THEIR LIGHT 20 LB. TEST LINE.

COD ARE VORACIOUS FEEDERS RANGING DEPTHS FROM 60-1500 FT. ITEMS FOUND IN THEIR STOMACHS INCLUDE ROCKS, RINGS, CORNCOBS, KEYS, RUBBER DOLLS, BOOKS, A RABBIT, A PARTRIDGE, A WHITE TURNIP AND BEER BOTTLES. NORMALLY THEY EAT ALL AVAILABLE FISH FAVORING HERRING, SQUID, CRABS, CLAMS AND LOBSTERS WHICH THEY CRUSH WITH THEIR SHARP TEETH. YOUNG COD AND HADDOCK ARE SPLIT AND SERVED AS "SCROD!"



Sinker Bouncing with Matt Ahern

HOOKS

Flounder fishing was pretty good that day. Not exceptional, by any means, but enough fish were coming over the party boat rail to gladden the heart of each fisherman. I had only been fishing two hours and about two dozen medium-sized fish were already in my bucket. Some fellows had more; some less, but even those with fewer fish seemed happy enough. That is, all but one young fellow fishing about ten feet from me. I was removing a deeply-swallowed hook from a good-sized flounder when this fellow let out a muffled curse and muttered, "Look at this, will you! Damn!" He was talking more so to himself than to anyone in particular; but he had gotten my attention and piqued my curiosity. I dropped my flounder in the bucket and walked over to him. "What's the trouble?" I asked. "Look at this," he said, showing me one of the two hooks on his tandem-tied rig. It was a common, ordinary #9 Chestertown flounder hook. Its point was bent forward, the bend sprung and no longer true to its design. "Every time I get hung on a clump of weed or whatever, this is what happens." He removed the offending hook and tossed it overside. "This is the fourth time this morning. How in the hell you can hook fish with something like that?" How, indeed.

"What kind are they?" I asked.

"What kind are they?" he repeated, his tone of voice indicating I should have known better than to ask. "They're flounder hooks."

I knew then this fellow wasn't up on hooks. "I mean, who made them?"

He rummaged through his gear and came up with the familiar plastic sleeve. "Size 9—Flounder" was all the information it contained. Nothing else. Junk. Then he proved my point by saying: "I picked them up on sale in a cut-rate drug store the other day."

So ends a common tale of woe.

Before we get deeper into this article, let me say this: don't try to save money when buying fishhooks. Be on guard when you see those so-called "sales" being offered. Unless those hooks are made by Mustad, Eagle Claw, or Pflueger, run—don't walk—for the nearest exit. Good fishhooks are so cheap, I can't for the life of me understand why anyone would want to save a few pennies in this department. No manufacturer proud of his product fails to display his name so all may see.

Never lose sight of the fact that while you may cheerfully spend a week's pay on a rod and reel and feel you are the best equipped fisherman in your neck of the woods, it will avail you naught if you skimp on the cheapest part of your gear: the fishhook. It is that ten cent hook that connects you to your fish. If it fails, so do you. Certainly, pennywise and pound foolish applies here.

And don't be conned by those fishing tackle ads which inform that their sale items are "famous name" brands. Washington and Lincoln are certainly famous names, but if ever I saw those used in relationship to fishing tackle, I'd certainly think a bit. Be guided accordingly.

All good fishermen have an abiding interest in fishhooks—and well they should. And here let me say this: if you don't, you most certainly should. If you know a crackerjack fisherman, ask him about hooks. If he doesn't amaze you with his knowledge on the subject, I'll be much surprised.

While not all of these fellows will agree as to the proper size or hook style for a particular fish (although all recommendations will surely be within prescribed limits), you will find all agree that without the use of the hook of their choice (a choice which has been finely honed by trial-and-error), their catches would be greatly reduced.

These are the fellows who have studied fish so intensely, it seems there is nothing further to be learned. But, of course, they know this isn't so. There is always something to be discovered, some intriguing bit of evidence that sets them off on a new path. It's what puts the zing in fishing. Truly, no man knows all there is to know about fishing—nor will he ever know.

And the same applies to fishhooks.

For instance: from my own experience, I no longer use the common Chestertown hook for flounder, but instead put my faith in Mustad's #6 regular-shanked Sproat (often called trout hooks by our freshwater brothers). I have had much success with these and I know I've found flounder easier to hook when using them. (My catch has actually doubled!)

But there are some fishermen I've given these hooks to who tell me the next time I feel generous, I should get lost. They readily admit they have no trouble hooking fish with these small Sproats, but find they do have difficulty when removing one which has been deeply swallowed. In this respect, all I can say is that I have never found this to be so.

But the fact remains that there are fishhooks and there are fishhooks, each designed for a particular use.

That thin bit of curved steel, which many fishermen view with little more than a cursory glance, has quite a history. A history going back to the beginning of the Iron and Bronze Age, when hooks made of bone, antlers, and similar materials were finally given the deep-six. For civilization as we know it, the discovery of malleable metals was a momentous step forward.

I am as certain as if I had been there, that the fishhook must have been one of the first ingenious designs formed. For it is doubtful that without the aid of the fishhook, mankind could have advanced as rapidly as it did.

In those dreary days before iron and bronze discoveries, food, of course, was man's most pressing need and the fishhook made it possible for him to forsake dangerous catch-as-catch-can methods of hunting with rock, club, or spear in order to stave off starvation. Truly, the fishhook (and the fish net) must be considered one of the major stepping-stones to modern civilization.

So, the next time you hold a fishhook in your hand, remember you are looking at five thousand years of civilization. Except to manufacture fishhooks by machine instead of painstaking hand-craftmanship, there isn't much change in their overall appearance. After all, it is pretty difficult to improve on perfection.

Historians say the first fishhooks were made in China and brought to Germany by overland travelers, and thence to England. Some fishhook patterns go back to the Fifteenth Century and most, at that time, were made in the City of London, the then-capitol of the needle-making trade. Because of this, it was a simple matter to convert to hook-making. One of the most reliable designs still in existence is the Kirby hook. It was invented by Charles Kirby of London in 1655. Fluke fishermen of today still use that same hook style. Truly, as said before, it is difficult to improve on perfection.

I could go on and on with this, for I am a hook fanatic, as you must have surmised by now. But rather than do that and possibly run the risk of boring you to tears, I'll list the hooks we sinker bouncers use and give you my opinion of them. They are all available in any well-stocked tackle shop.

Chestertown: For the flounder fisherman, this hook needs no introduction. They are also the favorite of many eel fishermen who swear by them. Make it a habit to check the point occasionally. A good, well-tempered Chestertown will seldom fold after only one snagging. This hook is not very strong due to its long shank, coupled with its thinness of wire, and even in its larger sizes should not be purposely used for heavy fish. I did catch a thirty-two pound striper on one years ago while

spring flounder fishing in Jamaica Bay, but I was just lucky on that one.

Sproat: This is an old-timer and most bait fishermen have used it at one time or another. Good for soft-mouthed fish from flounder to cod. It is strong for its size and penetrates quickly. When sprung, it is easily returned to its original shape. The point tends to be soft and should be touched-up occasionally—or better yet, discarded.

Carlisle: This is a long-shanked hook, much preferred by fluke fishermen. It is thin enough to use with live killies; yet in its appropriate size will hold any fluke you may encounter.

Aberdeen: Primarily a live bait hook because of its thin wire. I believe they are better for freshwater fishing, although I know full well some saltwater fishermen won't agree with me on that. Personally, I find these hooks too soft of temper for my taste, and rarely use them.

Kirby: Similar in appearance to the Carlisle and a good substitute for fluke or whiting fishing or for any fish having sharp teeth. I have occasionally used these for snappers.

Limerick: This is the favorite of the commercial cod setliner. Its specially formed, oversized eye is ideal for their trawl lines. I have used these when codfishing for many years and have no fault to find except that perhaps it takes a little more doing to stay put. But once in place, it will not pull out; hence, its popularity among commercial setliners who must, by necessity, let the cod hook itself and perhaps remain unattended for hours.

Claw: An extremely sharp, strong hook with a rolled-in point. Designed for quick-biting fish, it also works well on the leather-jawed cod. Can be used by blackfishermen with good results.

Beak: Similar to the Claw hook, with the same good things going for it.

O'Shaughnessy: Much like the Sproat in design, but slightly heavier with a forged shank for greater strength. I have used these on occasion, but have never been enthused by the results obtained when bait fishing. Many artificial lures comes equipped with these hooks.

Virginia: This above all others is the blackfisherman's favorite, and well it should be. Designed especially for these fish, its offset hollow point and barb quickly anchors itself in the cagey black's jaws.

Before I bring this to an end, I just want to mention this. Last winter I offered a copy of Mustad's Guide to the Selection of Saltwater Bait Hooks. The response was overwhelming and I quickly ran out. I now have a new batch and I'll send them out while the supply lasts.

Today there are hooks in virtually every size, shape, material, and color. The market demands thousands of variations according to local traditions, available species, and special needs.

Most of those hooks mentioned in this article are contained within its pages and in actual size. There is also a bit on saltwater baits and how to use them on your hook. I'm sure you will find the Guide informative and interesting.

If you would like to have a copy, send me a stamped, self-addressed envelope (#10, business size), and I'll get one right back to you. Address me at: 39 King Street, Hampton Bays, New York 11946. (Not to the office; this will only delay your receiving it.) I'll keep sending them out while the supply lasts; so don't hold off too long.

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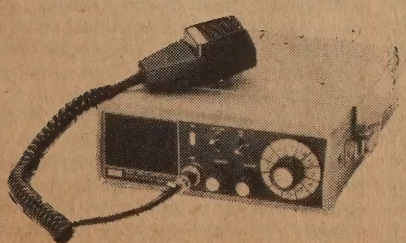

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NATIONAL SCENE

NEWS & NOTES ON THE WORLD OF FISHING
with Al Ristori

NATURAL GAS FIND IS GOOD NEWS FOR METROPOLITANAREA

On November 12, Texaco announced the largest natural gas discovery in the Baltimore Canyon at a test well drilled about 105 miles off Atlantic City. This is the fourth natural gas discovery in a very small area of the canyon and offsets to some degree the disappointing results in terms of oil so far. It's also good news for both consumers and ecologists—as we may be able to "have our cake and eat it too!"

Natural gas is our cleanest fuel and carries no environmental hazards—other than the normal problems caused by a certain amount of shoreside development. Though I've had no great fears in relation to offshore oil drilling, based on my experiences in the Gulf of Mexico, I believe that everyone will be a lot happier with the natural gas production. Even the temporary drilling rigs have served as fish attractors, and the permanent installations should provide some super fishing opportunities.

Unfortunately, it's not all "in the bag." Despite the flow rate of 14.2 million cubic feet per day in the latest well, there's still some question as to whether the natural gas reservoir below the seabed is large enough to justify the enormous expenditures necessary to build the rigs and pipelines needed to bring the gas ashore. A Texaco spokesman has estimated the cost to be $500 million—and the time frame to be eight years! Obviously, this isn't something that they're going to jump into without a good assurance that enough gas is there, but the fact that they've already payed millions for the leases and are spending $60,000 a day to explore, would indicate that they're serious about the possibilities.

Without a doubt, our area badly needs a local source of this precious fuel. American natural gas comes from the southwest in pipelines and is very reasonably priced as compared with other fuels. However, the supply isn't sufficient and the northeast is heavily dependent on imports in liquified form from Algeria. Not only is the source of supply extremely unstable, but the liquified gas itself is very dangerous to handle and store.

Since drilling began about 20 months ago off our coastline, there has been only one minor oil discovery to go with the four natural gas strikes—and 16 dry wells. The latter experience has led many companies that laid out millions for leases to abandon the area altogether. Yet, these results aren't really all that bad when you consider the fact that it's normal for only one hole in ten to produce anything—and only one in fifty turns out to be commercially feasible! As a result of the drilling that's gone on so far, the Federal government has revised its estimate of the reserves in the area from a maximum of 1.4 billion barrels of oil down to 1.02 billion, but increased the natural gas estimates from 9.4 trillion cubic feet to 13.5 trillion cubic feet.

Texaco is the only company still drilling in Baltimore Canyon, but a group led by Tenneco is sharing the estimated $19 million cost of the latest well in order to determine if the field is commercially viable. Tenneco had a significant gas discovery in the area this spring. In the meantime, controvery still surrounds exploratory leasing on Georges Bank—though the real objection of the commercial fishing industry there is to the loss of fishing area, rather than the possibilities of oil leakage damaging the fisheries.

FAROE ISLANDS MAY PROVE THREAT TO LOCAL SHARK FISHERY

The Faroe Islands have signed a Governing International Fisheries Agreement with the United States, and the way is now open for them to get involved in the shark fishery of the northeast. They once conducted a porbeagle shark fishery in the area between Cape Hatteras and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, but left even before the 200 mile limit went into effect. Porbeagles were once common enough in our area, particularly in the spring. This mako look-alike followed the mackerel along the coast and was usually the first shark encountered by local anglers. However, they could be taken all summer on Coxes Ledge and other areas to the east.

The Faroese longline operation appeared to "do in" the porbeagles in our area. At least, they've virtually disappeared since that time and there isn't any other factor to blame it on. Some porbeagles are still reported from north of Cape Cod, but they don't appear to be abundant anywhere. Therefore, the question is "what are the Faroese really interested in?" My suspicion is that they will gladly "settle" for makos (which are as good eating as porbeagles) and blues, plus the various other species found off the mid-Atlantic and New England coasts.

It was just such a possibility that the Inter-Council Billfish Steering Committee tried to shut off soon after the 200-Mile Limit went into effect. The original Billfish and Shark PMP included a restriction on the taking of blues, makos and porbeagles (the prime sportsharks)—making them prohibited species which couldn't be taken in the shark surplus. Unfortunately, we had to give up this provision at the last minute as there just weren't any facts and figures available with which to justify the prohibition. This even applied to the porbeagle—though no one could tell me where to go to find one to study!

At that time it didn't appear to be a very serious loss. We'd gotten the original "surplus" of over 30,000 metric tons of sharks down to just 1,200 metric tons—and it was assumed that the Japanese would take these out of the Gulf of Mexico in the spring (at that time we didn't know that there were large numbers of makos in the Gulf) and fill the quota before they even go to our area. However, the Japanese never applied for a shark quota and have been releasing that portion of their catch alive (with an 80-90% live release rate). The Cubans applied for a quota that many suspected was just an excuse to take large "incidental" catches of grouper and snapper. This brought about the quick action of the Gulf Council in developing a shark plan that would cut off this possibility.

Though the present quota isn't large, it could have a serious effect on our sport fisheries for makos and porbeagles—species which are never abundant. Blue sharks probably wouldn't be as badly impacted, but it must be kept in mind that sharks are our most delicate resource. It seems a contradiction in terms to call sharks "delicate", but the fact is that they are slow growing, long lived and have low reproductive capacities. Overfishing can not only damage the immediate future of the fishery, but also reduce the population of these oceanic wanderers to the point where reproduction vitually stops and the species gradually disappears from those waters. That may have already happened with the porbeagle in this area—and we'll have to be alert to make sure it doesn't happen to the mako!

The Faroese shark fishery should not be permitted in view of the species they will be impacting—not to mention the possible by-catch of swordfish and other billfish and tunas. We'll be keeping a close eye on this one!

NO BASS LIMITS... AT LEAST NOT YET!

by Lester Boyd

The Federal/State Striped Bass Management Program seems to be doing lazy circles in the air without making forward progress.

Last spring, the Regional Citizens Advisory Committee recommended to the Striped Bass Sub-Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission that some interim controls be placed on the striper fishery to decrease catch mortality. The controls would be temporary, designed to halt the decline of the striper stocks while scientists evaluated the stocks and examined the reasons for the decline.

Specifically, the Advisory Committee recommended that a size limit of twenty-six inches and a four fish per day bag limit be placed on the coastal recreational fishery. In inland spawning waters such as the Chesapeake Bay, the size limit would be fourteen inches; that's two inches larger than present minimums there, and sport fishermen would be limited to taking eight fish per day.

The Committee did not make any recommendations for the commercial striper fishery, but did take the position that anyone selling striped bass should be considered a commercial fisherman and should be licensed as such. Some of the states were already working on plans that would set high license fees for commercial fishermen as a means of limiting the number of fish-for-pay anglers. However, no state has passed a plan yet.

There was some hope on March 3 when the Advisory Committee voted its recommendations at a meeting in Baltimore that some action could be taken before the end of this striper season. But it was not until fall that the Sub-Board took any action, and the action it took isn't likely to result in any reduction of the catch mortality, even if its proposed regulations are enacted—which isn't going to happen in the immediate future.

The Sub-Board, which is made up of fishery officials from the twelve states participating in the program, discarded the proposal for a twenty-six inch size limit. There isn't enough evidence that the limit would have a significant effect on the bass population, the Board found, and the increase from an average of sixteen to twenty-six inches in minimum sizes would be too drastic a step.

The Board did agree to a four fish per day bag limit in the coastal recreational fishery and a fourteen inch size limit and an eight fish per day bag limit in the Chesapeake and other producing waters. It agreed with the Advisory Committee's position that commercial fishermen ought to be licensed as such.

That action went back to the Citizens Committee, which got together on October 12 and 13 at Hyannis. The citizens were clearly dismayed at the Sub-Board's rejection of the twenty-six inch limit. They had been told by the Scientific Committee that twenty-six inch females contribute more eggs and fry to the fishery than any other size: that is, while larger fish would produce more eggs individually, the numbers of twenty-six inch fish would more than make up for the difference.

Because they still believed an increased minimum size would help conserve fish, Advisory Committee members voted to recommend that current size limits in each state be increased by two inches. That would make the minimum length eighteen inches in all coastal states except New Jersey, where it would go to twenty. (Since other states measure to the fork of the tail and New Jersey measures to the tip, there is very little difference in the actual size.) In inland spawning areas, the minimum size would go to fourteen inches.

That recommendation was given back to the Sub-Board which will consider it and either approve or reject it.

All of this gives the picture of progress; however, when examined closely, it can be seen that little is happening or is about to happen.

In the event the Sub-Board, which is the ruling board in the Federal/State program, decides to go along with the two inch size increase along with the four fish limit in coastal, and the eight fish limit in inland waters, its members will go back to their respective states and support passage of those regulations—either in state legislatures or regulatory boards.

But that's all they can do. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has no power to force anybody to do anything. Its members can submit bills to a state legislature and then support the bills; but given the political nature of legislators, and the pressures on them from various groups, there is absolutely no assurance that anything will happen. In the case of regulatory agencies such as the Marine Fisheries Division of the Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources or the Marine Fisheries Council in Rhode Island, their support would probably carry more clout, but there is still no assurance they could push the proposed regulations through.

What would happen if they did? Would the regulations have a significant effect on catch mortality and thus preserve the declining stocks? Probably not. As it now stands (and there doesn't seem to be much prospect for a change in the near future), in New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, where the bulk of the big market fish are caught, the four fish limit wouldn't mean a thing. Any fisherman could circumvent the law (except in Connecticut where striped bass are game fish and can't be sold) simply by becoming a commercial fisherman. And commercial fishermen, under the plans now being considered, can take unlimited numbers of fish.

In New York, no license is required of a commercial fisherman. In Rhode Island you can become a commercial fisherman for $5; in Massachusetts you can sell up to one hundred pounds of fish a day without a license. If you want to sell more than that, you need a $5 license.

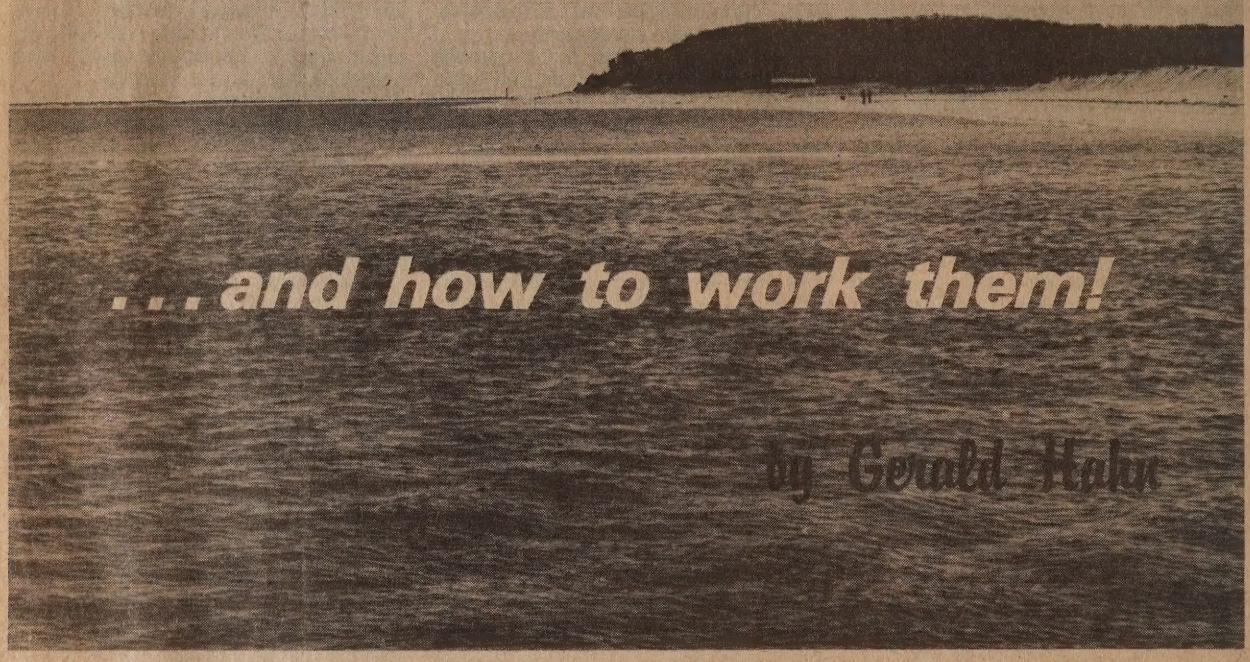
Under those laws, the four fish per day limit means nothing at all. A bass fisherman who has $5,000 invested in a boat and motor (and many have more than that invested), hundreds of dollars in fishing tackle, and who burns $10 worth of outboard gas when he goes out, isn't going to balk at a $5 license. If a four fish per day limit is imposed without putting a stiff price on a commercial license, it won't mean a thing.

As for the proposed fourteen inch limit in producing areas such as Chesapeake Bay, there's little chance the commercial fishermen there would accept it. If the size limit there were increased, gill netters—who take most of the fish—would have to use nets with larger mesh size. This would allow white perch, another valuable commercial fish in the Bay, to slip through. The commercial fishermen there have already served notice that they can't live with a fourteen inch limit.

That's where the Federal/State Striped Bass Management Plan stands as of now. The Regional Citizens Advisory Committee and

(Continued on page 21.)

SANDBARS



. . . and how to work them!

by Gerald Hahn

View of a sandbar in the channel off Accabonac Harbor. Note also the dropoff in front of the bar.

A sand bar is a rise in the basin of a body of water formed by currents. Almost every bay in Long Island—Great South Bay, Shinnecock Bay, Peconic Bay, Gardiner's Bay—has its share of sand bars. Moriches Bay is so shallow that at times it looks like one vast bar. At low tide, many sand bars break through the surface of the water, forming yellow islands lined with sea gulls, or extensions of shore line points. Many bars are even visible at high tide; others as yellowish stains in an otherwise blue sea. Some sand bars are relatively stable; i.e., they remain the same from one season to the next. Others are constantly on the move, like sandy icebergs shifting from one spot to another. Stable bars are usually in areas where tides and currents do not exert much pressure. Moving bars are often near the meeting place of several kinds of water; e.g., at inlets where the Atlantic flows in and out of a bay, or in a race where fast moving water is forced through a narrow area. When water runs with great force over a bar, a rip is formed—that is, the water becomes turbulent. Another term for the shallow waters that form over a sand bar is a shoal.

Some people confuse sand bars with reefs. Reefs are also a result of a rise in bottom formations, but in most cases, they are made of coral or rocks, not sand. Most coral reefs are located in tropical waters, in places like Florida or the South Seas. Some rocky reefs are evident in Long Island Sound, such as the one off Mt. Misery Point in Port Jefferson. There are even artificial reefs made of concrete blocks, old tires, and barges. Several are located in the ocean just outside of Long Island's inlets. And I imagine that one could call those offshore oil wells in the Gulf of Mexico, a kind of reef. A wreck is a kind of reef, as well.

Sand bars are excellent places to fish for most species. In general, any kind of bottom obstruction is desirable. Microorganisms, marine plants, bivalves, barnacles and the like, hide or gain hold-fasts on rocks, coral, or artificial debris. A haven is created that attracts fish fry, as well, and a chain reaction begins, for wherever small organisms congregate, larger ones are sure to follow. But sand bars are usually devoid of such living matter. Indeed, shifting sands are no safe place to set up a home; yet they are an important link in the process of predation. Small sea creatures—infant crabs, grass shrimp, baitfish, etc.—are torn loose from their hiding places when currents pick up speed and tumble helplessly in the rips formed by sand bars. Larger fish wait for them to catch an easy meal and knowledgeable anglers complete the chain by fishing these areas.

There are two ways to fish a sand bar: anchoring and drifting. For predatory fish—stripers, blues, weaks, fluke—anchoring should be in deep water on the down-current side of a sand bar. Casts should be made with small artificials onto the bar, and then, by lifting the rod and letting the current carry the lure into the dropoff, a struggling baitfish is simulated. For example, during the weakfish run in Peconic Bay, some fishermen work the sand bar off the southern tip of Robins Island with soft plastic lures or natural baits. On the incoming tide, they anchor west of the bar. This way, the current carries the lure or bait over the bar and into the tidal rips. On the outgoing tide, they move over to the east side of the bar and fish it the same way. It is also possible to bottom fish near a sand bar. I have taken many porgies by anchoring off

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The New Jersey Transportation Authority is about to begin a large scale dredging operation at Romer Shoals in the New York Bight that will completely destroy the great sportfishing this area has provided in the past. You can do your part to prevent this rape of one of our great natural resources by filling out and mailing the postcard below to the Governor of New Jersey to officially protest this action. If we put enough pressure on Gov. Byrne there is a good chance that Romer Shoals can be saved. SO MAIL IT TODAY!!!

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

the sand bar at Paradise Pt., just west of Shelter Island. The big dropoff is at the eastern end of this bar. I located this "hotspot" by the second method—drifting.

Many anglers drift exclusively in deep channels and this is why they catch only a few fish. Wherever possible, drifts should be made along or across a dropoff, the edge of sand bar. Drifting this way creates the same effect as casting from an anchored boat; i.e., the lure or bait hugs the sand bar, then tumbles down into the dropoff. On the flood tide, it is possible to drift over many submerged sand bars without running aground. This is a better method. In Moriches Bay, for example, the area off the Coast Guard Station, northeast of the inlet, is known for its numerous shifting sand bars. On the flood tide, a breeze usually comes out of the southwest together with ocean water and most drifts will take you northeast toward Seatuck Cove. Many anglers take short drifts over one sand bar and into the channel here, but a long drift will cover as many as half a dozen sand bars. I have taken many fluke this way, far away from the fleet.

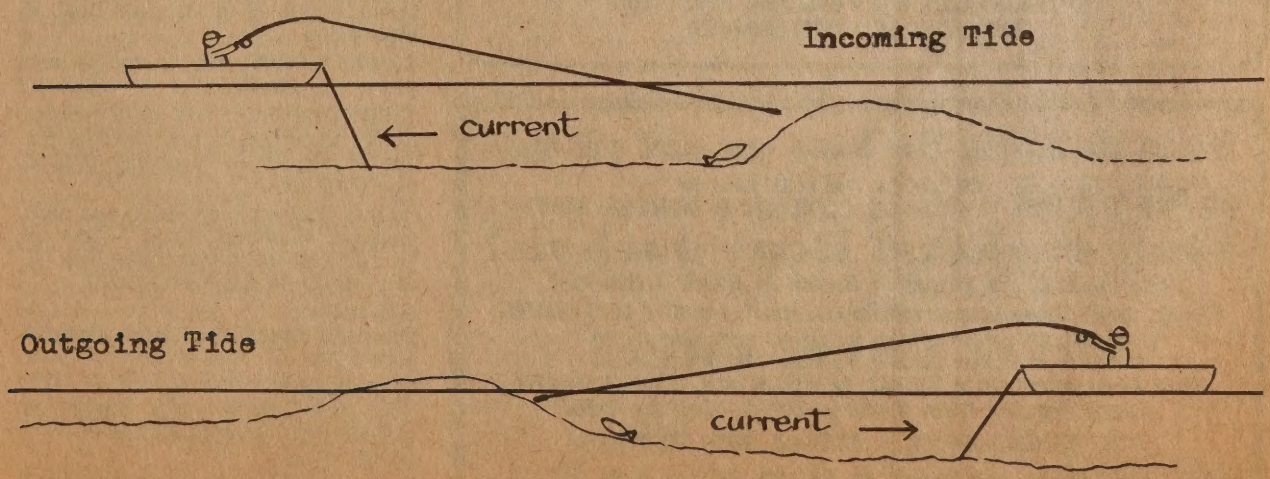
Some sand bars are hard to locate. There is one in the Rose's Grove area in Peconic Bay that looks like a tiny bubble at low tide. In fact, it is quite long, but only a small portion of it projects out of the water—like the tip of an iceberg. On the incoming tide, particularly on windy days, you cannot even detect a discoloration in the water. Most fishermen here rent skiffs and only private boat owners or party boats with electronics can pinpoint it. However, it is possible to locate the bar by range-finding. I did this one day many years ago at low tide. From the east side, I placed the boat in line with several landmarks: a radio tower on the southern mainland to the left and a prominent white house on Nassau Pt., on the north side to the right. Staying closer to the south shore, I pointed the boat west. The sand bar is just west of this line and in line with a sand cliff on the south side. Nowadays, even on the incoming tide, I can aim for the cliff until I pass the tower/white house line, then slow down. If the water is clear, then the color of the water does change sufficiently to spot the bar. If the water is choppy, I circle a little and then run several drifts, criss-crossing the area until I locate the rise by feeling for the sinker on the bottom. Once it is found, I anchor southwest of the bar; on the ebb, I move to the northeast side. Whereas dozens of boats can be seen anchored all over this area, only a few fishermen do really well on porgies and weaks. More often than not, they are near the sand bar.

If you think that all this effort in locating a sand bar is not worthwhile, let me say that some bars are so reliable that an experienced fisherman can predict when hits will occur. For example, last autumn I went fishing for blues on a party boat off Fisher's Island. The captain told us we would be running many short drifts this day over a rise or bar. The water in this area is generally about eighty feet deep, so the sand bar is not visible to the naked eye, and the captain located it with electronics. As the drift began, we lowered our lines. Within a minute, the captain called out, "Get ready; we're coming over the rise!" Suddenly, rods doubled over from bow to stern and almost everyone was into a chopper. This happened half a dozen times, with the captain calling the shots. Now, it's true that the printout from his recorder showed fish in the area. But it also indicated a sand bar—and the captain knew that the two go together.

By no means are sand bars exclusively in the domain of boat fishermen. Surfcasters are always looking for sand bars. There is one, for example, near the radio shack at Jones Inlet. At low tide, some surfcasters wade and climb onto this long bar. From here, they can make casts into the dropoff that would otherwise be beyond their reach. On the incoming tide, they know where the bar is located and they can cast to it from the jetty. The east jetty of Moriches Inlet has two sand bars: one off the ocean end; the other closer to the bay end. During the last two hours of the ebb tide, waves break over the bar at the ocean end and outgoing water creates a highly visible rip. Many bluefish are caught here by casting past the bar and slowing down the retrieve at the dropoff. The other rip, however, works better with bait. On dark nights just before low slack, an eel or flounder fry can be worked for a blue or bass, by casting it without any weight and letting the current do the job. Although the jetty is fairly long and there are many places to throw out a line, these two sand bars are the most productive.

Next time you go fishing, start paying attention to those islands of sand in the water. Remember the advertisement that went "You'll wonder where the **yellow** went..." Start wondering.

Working a Sandbar



Fishing Widow Syndrome

by M. Betty Alexander

The modern woman is afflicted by many problems in today's world. If you live within 100 miles of a body of water of any appreciable size, chances are you may have contracted Fishing-Widow Syndrome. To determine the severity of the handicap, answer the following questions true or false:

ONE. Your husband's boat is in tip-top condition but the rain leaks into your house.

TWO. His clothes are in your closet because his fishing wardrobe is in his closet.

THREE. On any given weekend, he is more likely to lay his hands on a fiddler crab than you.

FOUR. A plain white box in the refrigerator is more likely to contain bloodworms rather than an after-school snack.

FIVE. Your kitchen ceiling has scales on it.

SIX. Every cat in the neighborhood is on good terms with your garbage pails.

SEVEN. Your children don't recognize their father except by smell.

EIGHT. Half your freezer is devoted to chum.

NINE. He whispers into your ear the joys of night-striping rather than sweet-nothings.

TEN. Your bookcase contains eight years of back issues of The Long Island Fisherman that must not be thrown out.

ELEVEN. He insists once a year you accompany him on a fishing venture which begins at 3 a.m., and you suffer from jet-lag for two days afterwards.

TWELVE. You are under instructions to feel how thick each flounder is that has been brought home.

THIRTEEN. You get to play nurse and stand ready with first-aid as he fillets the day's catch.

FOURTEEN. You supply sandpaper and cooking oil as he lovingly cares for each item in his tacklebox.

FIFTEEN. The neighbors start to line up for samples as soon as his car pulls up the driveway after a day on the briny.

SIXTEEN. The car trunk smells funny.

SEVENTEEN. Your Christmas gifts always include at least two fish cookbooks.

EIGHTEEN. The last thing you hear upon retiring each night is the marine weather forecast.

NINETEEN. You no longer have a broom closet; you have a fishing rod closet.

TWENTY. You have high telephone bills resulting from calls to fishing stations to ascertain "what's running."

TWENTY-ONE. A "meat stick" is not a barbecue accessory.

TWENTY-TWO. Your medicine cabnet is well-stocked with dramamine for deep-sea adventures.

TWENTY-THREE. His idea of a family outing is to visit the boat at the marina.

TWENTY-FOUR. He refused to take you to see JAWS.

TWENTY-FIVE. The only photograph he carries in his wallet is the one of the 15 lb. weakfish draped over your sink.

Give yourself four points for each question answered "true." Add up your total score to determine how far your condition has deteriorated.

0-60 Points:
Congratulations! You still have a social life.

60-80 Points:
You may be on the verge of considering growing gills and fins.

80-100 Points:
Severe fishing widowhood, but have you surveyed the price of fresh fish in the supermarket lately?

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"OL' SALTY" TUNA

by Henry Schaefer

When Captain Bob Pisano brought his charter boat Ol' Salty back to Belmar Marine Basin on November 5, he had fulfilled a dream of many New Jersey tuna fishermen: a 1,000 lb. bluefin, one of the old age giants that had become almost commonplace in the catches north of Cape Cod and the Maritime Provinces in recent years, but which up until that time had eluded fishermen in the Mud Hole.

Actually, the fish weighed 955½ lbs., but it missed the one grand mark by only a whisker, and it shattered the New Jersey State Record by a whisker short of two hundred pounds.

The fish was fought by Mike Formichella of Long Valley, no stranger to the sport of giant tuna fishing, who caught a 905 lber. off Prince Edward Island during the five years he has been actively pursuing bluefins.

The half-ton monster replaced the 796 lb. tuna caught by Joe Casale in 1973 when Jersey fishermen were still looking for their first 800 lber.

Pisano's big fish came during the third week of the most fantastic late autumn tuna action the New Jersey coast had ever witnessed, throughout which the Ol' Salty scored heavily with bluefins ranging from short of 150 lbs. and up. Throughout the period, all sorts of theories were being expounded as to why there were so many bluefins in the Mud Hole so late in the year.

But some said it wasn't really late in the year because giant tuna aren't as sensitive to cool water as the schoolies and some captains—Howard Bogan of Brielle among them—said they had seen giant fish jumping out of the water as late as December in recent years.

According to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, the U.S. Atlantic Tuna Tournament, and just about every sport and commercial tuna fisherman on the Eastern Seaboard, the mighty bluefin is a threatened species.

Strict regulations have been in effect for several years to restrict the catch of giant and smaller tuna, and nobody on the Jersey coast was quite prepared for the late season run of fish ranging from forty pounds or so and up—way up.

The Mud Hole was the cradle of giant tuna fishing along the entire Eastern Seaboard in the 1930s and after suitable tackle became available to handle the "horse mackerel" as they known to old-time commercial bluefishermen. Main ingredient in the suitable tackle department was the star drag reel, first offered in reasonably priced production models by Penn. Indeed, the original Penn Senators in sizes 9/0, 10/0 and particularly 12/0 did more to get giant tuna fishing rolling than any other factor.

There were, at that time, a few custom made reels available that used different drag systems, and they all worked after a fashion, but Penn captured the market with its Senators.

The U.S. Atlantic Tuna Tournment started in the Mud Hole prior to World War II and resumed for several years after the war, when giants were present every summer along with astronomical numbers of smaller fish. But the Tournament quit Jersey about twenty-five years ago as tuna became increasingly scarce.

Last year not a single giant (300 lbs. and over) was caught in the Mud Hole, and there were very few tuna under that weight.

And then came October, 1979, which produced astonishingly good fishing for bluefish, weakfish; the best fall run of stripers in years, and the unprecedented run of tuna.

The man from whom I received the first report of big tuna in the Mud Hole this fall is Captain Barry Goldman of the Ol' Salty II, Belmar, who along with many others had spent the summer fishing way out on the Continental Shelf primarily for yellowfin tuna. In the belief that no bluefin tuna were present in worthwhile numbers closer to shore, just about every big game fisherman who wasn't interested in sharks, was making runs to the Shelf.

Goldman had the Mud Hole fishing pretty much to himself at first, but other charter and many private boats got into the act; and late in October, there were as many as three hundred boats estimated to be fishing for tuna on a single day. On Thursday, November 1, there were about forty tuna weighing 120 lbs. and over, piled on the docks of Belmar Marine Basin alone. Nobody knows how many tuna were brought in during a two-week period, but estimates ranged from 200 to 300.

During the week of October 28, Captain David Bogan of the Paramount, Brielle, reported the tuna concentration in the Mud Hole stretched over twelve miles. On every day that week, except for the concluding Saturday, one to three tuna ranging from 120 to 278 lbs. were caught on his party boat. One plausible explanation for the presence of the tuna this fall was the unusual clarity of the water. Tuna dislike murky water and simply avoid it.

When Formichella went out on the Ol' Salty on Pisano's invitation on the historic day, he had a team of experts to help him. In addition to Pisano, they included Captains Don Imbriaco of the charter boat Fiesta, and Bob Dowling of the charter boat Huntress—all three of whom had seen plenty of action in the run to that date.

There was also Doug Rusch, The Sportsmen's Outfitter, Westfield, which had made the custom rod Formichella was using. The reel used on the big fish was the 80W Penn International and it was loaded with 130 lb. test Gudebrod Dacron line.

Pisano has no use for monofilament for giant tuna. The 200 lb. test mono leader was ten feet long and the hook was a 9/0 The bait was a live whiting fished thirty feet below the surface, but the exact depth means little to a fish that is ten-and-a-half feet long which is at home from the surface to the deepest depression in the hole—about three hundred feet.

As giant tuna often are, this one wasn't really scared when the angler struck it. It started moving off slowly "in little spurts." The anglers and his team thought at that point that it might be a fish in the 100 lb. class. But then the giant realized that it was really in trouble and went off on a blistering run that took five hundred yards of line off the reel, and wound up on the bottom in three hundred feet of water.

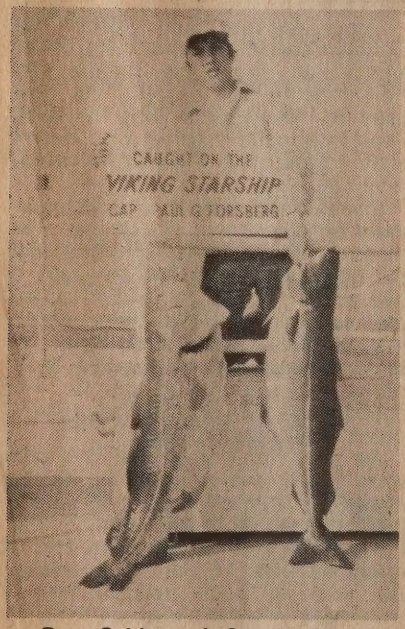
But after two hours and twenty-five minutes of fighting and expert boat handling, the double line was back on the reel and Pisano had the leader in hand. Imbriaco did the gaffing and Dowling handled the boat throughout the fight.

The tuna was weighed at The Fisherman's Den, Neptune.

MONTAUK
★ BEST BET ★
MIXED BAG

Captain Richie Rade of the **Marlin Fleet** has been working Southwest Ledge and Cartwright and over the weekend had roughly 50-60 blackfish in the 10-12 lb. range. The weekend also produced approximately 50 cod, including a few 30 lbers. A 31 lb. pollack came over the rail, as did a few 40 lb. hake. Catches of ling and whiting also filled out anglers' sacks and just to prove that the water is still warm, a 3 lb. fluke was also caught. All fares have been catching and with some cold water due to move in soon, catches should improve further.

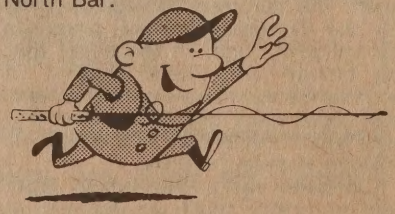
The **Viking Starship** with Captain Paul Forsberg at the helm left for Florida Sunday. He will be sailing his first Florida trip to the Tortugas Banks on December 7. See ad for details. Anyone venturing south this winter should make it a point to get in on some of this fabulous fishing. Meanwhile, locally the **Viking Star** will continue to sail for cod daily at 6AM. This past week, the codfishing has been fair.



Ray Ochlan of Staten Island was a pool winner on October 20th with this 46 lb. cod taken on the "Viking Starship."

Jay Rigano holds up two of ten bass up to 32 lbs., taken on the "Vivienne" out of Montauk.

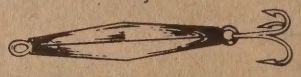
Captain Warren Hader of the charter boat **Devilfish** reported that he wound up the 1979 fishing season with a trip to Cartwright Saturday. Warren said that what the blackfish lacked in numbers, they made up for with their size. A half dozen blacks in the 10 lb. class were taken on green crabs, along with a 40 lb. cod, a mess of small "cigar" cod and a "whole s---load of dogfish." Warren also said that he saw a surfcaster weigh in a 61½ lb. striped bass, the guy said he caught Saturday night at North Bar.



SOUTH FORK
★ BEST BET ★
MIXED BAG

SHINNECOCK

Thom at **Speck's Bait and Tackle** reported flounder of mixed sizes taking worms and clams in the area. Among some of the more productive spots have been the Canal, the Basket Grounds, and the south side of Shinnecock Bay.



GREAT SOUTH BAY
★ BEST BET ★
FLOUNDER

BAY SHORE

Walter Kuszeliewicz and Dick Bohner of the Bay Shore Tuna Club had 3 cod Friday up to 39½ lbs. fishing open bottom in 100' of water. Clam was on the hook and bellies were used for chum.

CAPTREE

Charter boat **Capt. Leo III** called to tell us that the beloved beluga whale has been sighted back at the Sore Thumb. He spotted it Thursday at buoy 6 and followed it going past buoy 8.

Captain Gordon Roman of the **Captree Queen II** called to say he is now switching over to a full effort on cod, sailing 6AM daily. Blues were good earlier in the week, but by Friday, there were just a couple caught each day. Their place got gradually filled in by catches of cod, most of which were jigged on Ava 47s and 67s, intended for the bluefish. The best cod day was Friday which a total of 6 good sized cod. Doug Toder of College Point had a 20 and a 48 lb. cod. One angler bagged a 45 lber. Saturday. Most cod are running 20 lbs. and better. This has all been open bottom fishing on both the inshore and offshore Patchogue grounds and around the lightship buoy. A few cod were taken on bait, but most on jigs. The cods' bellies are full of crabs and sand eels.

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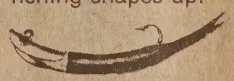
Fish Talk: BOTTOM FISHING

(Continued from page 9.)

boats, but otherwise will have little effect on the fishing. Whiting and ling fishing should build steadily to a winter peak, while big blacks will provide a steady pick. Late December into early January may be the roughest part of the winter—weatherwise. Look for extremely cold temperatures and high winds. Mid-January should be cooperative, while early February may again be very cold. Don't look for an early inshore flounder season in 1980, but by late March all ports should be reporting fish.

GET READY NOW. Now being early December; but, of course, many of you will already have sampled the cod by now. Since I'm writing this in late October (I could have cheated, but it wouldn't have been fair), you'll be able to tell whether my predictions were lucky guesses or dead wrong. Check the advertisements in The Long Island Fisherman and local newspapers for the names of boats and times of departures at your port of call. Drop me a line and let me know how your winter fishing shapes up.



NO BASS LIMIT YET

(Continued from page 15.)

the Sub-Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Council pretty much agree on a management plan, but they have no way to implement it. And even if it is implemented, it will do very little to ease the pressure on the striper fishery.

Most coastal striper fishermen agree the stocks are low. There is little agreement on why they are low. Theories include, but are not limited to, the abundance of bluefish, natural cycle, chemical pollution in the spawning areas, overfishing, sunspots influence, different migrating patterns, the lack of a food supply in the spawning rivers, a combination of two or more of those factors.

And while there may be wide differences of opinion on why the stocks are low, most agree it makes sense to preserve what we have until science finds the real answers and the solutions. That's why the interim controls were proposed in the first place. But it doesn't look as though we're going to have any for awhile.

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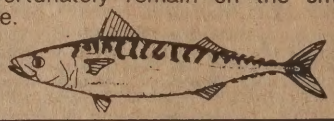
Captain Dan Juetner of the **Capt. Joseph Fleet** said he is still picking away at the cod on offshore wrecks. On Thanksgiving Day, 17 big cod came aboard with a couple of fish in the 40 lb. class. On Sunday, 12 cod up to 35 lbs. were landed by the fares on board. Dan heard via radio chatter that some boats had a fair pick of flounder in the State Channel.

Captain George Tweedy of the open boat **Capt. Scotty**, reported a catch of 16 cod up to 30 lbs. on Wednesday and a good catch of 27 fish to 50 lbs. on Friday. He called the fishing over the weekend picky and said that one day action is pretty good and other days, it's tough. All of the action so far has been on wrecks with only one or two fish taken on open bottom. George also relayed word that he had heard of improved flounder action in the bay.

BABYLON

Eric at **Augie's Bait and Tackle** says cod are definitely on the upswing now, with some nice catches being made by many private boats. Saturday saw Mike Moretti boat 9 cod up to 32 lbs. fishing in 90-95' of water 145° southeast of the Fl Inlet head buoy. On Sunday, Rich Schoen of W. Islip bagged a 27 lb. 15 oz. cod near the lightship buoy, also on open bottom. Flounder catches have been few and fish unfortunately remain on the small side.



SOUTH SHORE BAYS
★BEST BET★
FLOUNDER

SEAFORD

Wanser's Bait and Tackle says probably the best news is catches of some big cod offshore. Lonny had no details to speak of, but did tell us that there is quality, rather than quantity and most boats are picking a few good sized fish. Some flounder being taken in the Bay, but you must concentrate on the deeper water. Lon says best results have been just west of the 2nd Wantagh Bridge, Massapequa Cove and Wanser's Cut.

John at **Pop's Fishing Station** tells us that many small fish are still around; that the larger fish are there but are still sluggish due to the high water temperatures. He says we should have a great spring as a result of all these small fish now. John says he'll remain open weekends until there's ice on the canal and will re-open mid-March, 1980.

MERRICK

Nick's Fishing Station reports the flounder picture is essentially unchanged, with a lot of small fish but enough keepers to make the effort worthwhile. Merrick Pt., Rowboat Alley and Carmen's Cut have been best. Otto Voight had a 41 lb. cod which just beat out Henry Wabbe's 39½ lb. cod, taken on open bottom in 125' of water due south of Jones Inlet. They also had 4 other cod in the 20s.

In last week's 10 club cod tournament, John Suss took 3rd place in the total weight division out of Fl Inlet. Freeport Tuna Club bagged 2nd place total weight division out of Jones. This info courtesy of Joe Sanxta.

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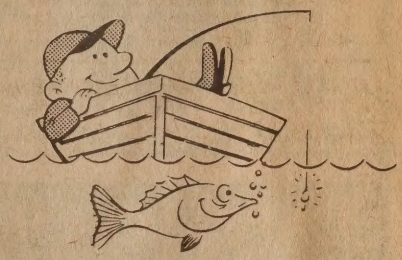

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Surf Side: IMPORTANT DETAILS

(Continued from page 10.)

the point of a hook grazes the fish can be enough to allow an angler with quick reflexes to sink the hook home.

A small file or sharpening stone can be carried in your vehicle to quickly put a fresh edge on the lures to be used that day. Hooks should be sharpened so that they do not form a knife edge which will slice through the flesh allowing the hook to pull free. The front and rear, or if you wish, the inside and outside edges should be honed—not the sides.

Up to this point, we have only dealt with the hooks found on artificial lures. Bait fishermen, while not encountering the same circumstances, must choose the hook suited for the purpose intended. Very few anglers will go fishing for flounder with hooks not specifically designed for this lopsided fish. By the same token, surfcasters using particular baits for a specific fish should use the correct hook.

When fishing live eels for striped bass, a short-shanked tuna hook in the smallest size practical is preferred, but an angler fishing chunks of cut bait should use a Siwash hook in a size which will allow the point of the hook to protrude slightly from the opposite side of the bait. If the bait is to be cut into filleted strips, smaller hooks often tied in tandem—to foil short-striking fish—can be used.

Fishermen using blood or sand worms for bass or weakfish, can make a selection between two types of hooks: the first is the Eagle Claw bait-saver with two spurs cut in the shank which is designed to catch the flesh of the worm and hold it in place. The second choice is the machine-wrapped hook which does not have an eye, but rather has the leader attached to the shank of the hook by being wrapped with thread. This design will allow the worms to be threaded up the shank of the hook, thus presenting a more natural appearance. Some of these hooks will have a pin secured in the wrapping with an exposed point facing in the direction of the leader to which the head of the worm is impaled, keeping the bait in position.

These hooks are often difficult to obtain in the local tackle shops. The only manufacturer that I am aware of is Pequea Fishing Tackle, Strasborg, Pa. A brief letter summarizing your needs should get you a supply of these hooks.

Jetty fishermen slinging live blackfish or bunker into nearby waters frequently use treble hooks in this unique fishing method. To the best of my recollection this is the only instance where treble hooks are used from the beach when using bait.

Most fishermen are concerned about the more visible articles relating to their sport, with little thought given to insignificant items such as hooks. Too often they are taken for granted. Unfortunately, this oversight to details often makes the difference between expertise and mediocrity.

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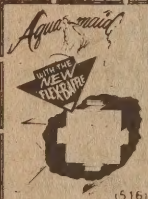

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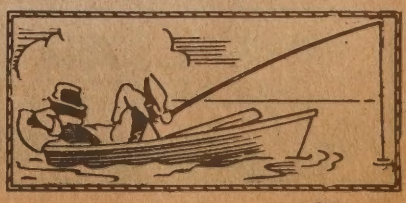

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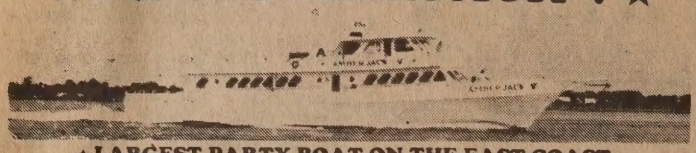

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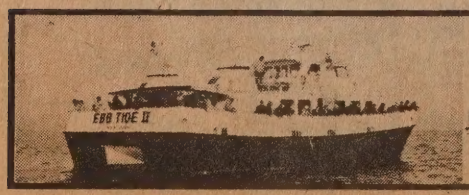

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FREEPORT

The **Captain Lou III** tells of very good to excellent flounder action all week long, including the weekend, with high hooks ranging in the sixties on keeper sized fluke. Herb Schwartz of Long Beach had 69 keepers Friday and the fish are a little bigger now says Mike. Big fish of the week ran 2½ lbs., but there are still a lot of small fish around, and these of course should be returned to the water and make us happy next year. The boat has been fishing local creeks.

The **Aloma II** is now fishing whiting and ling 7AM Saturday and Sundays only and reports good catches working the Ambrose area with catches pretty evenly divided between the whiting and ling. Whiting are running up to 2 lbs. and ling up to 3 lbs.

The **Captain Al** tells us that each wreck is yielding a few cod and those that are caught are BIG. Wednesday saw a 50 and 20 lber. go into the sack for Allen Klein of Lido Beach. On Saturday, Astoria angler Attilio Doberick boated a 36½ and a 28 lber. The cod god also obliged Albert Mezo of Malverne by presenting him with a 46 lb. lunker. A 34 lb. cod put a big smile on the face of Pat Ruggiero. There are some real trophy fish out there and Al suggests you try now for what

Jack McGuire and Pete Tucky with the largest bass of the day, a 38 lber., taken on Baby Bunker Spoons off the Rockaways, aboard the "Kim."

Walter Hager, his wife and friends both jigged and baited this mess of giant blues and bonito, east/southeast of Jones Inlet on the "Shalidon."

may turn out to be the big fish of your life. The water is still warm. A lot of fish are coming up lip-hooked, indicating that they're playing with the bait and are not really starving. Al quoted the late Carl Forsberg "You've got to suffer to catch cod," and Al says we're not suffering yet in this mild weather, so that the best is very likely yet to come.

Captain Richie Kessinger of the **Star Stream II** says he's been getting cod every trip with fish up to 40 lbs., but the quantity of fish is just not there yet. Big fish—yes. Filling out bags are ling, sea bass and blackfish. A big cod can take the pool with ease.

Ronnie at **Sea Isle Sports** also tells of big cod being caught offshore, with Saturday a better day than Sunday fish-wise, best area apparently at the 90' mark, all on bait. Ron also tells of plenty of flounder around in the local bays and creeks. A fair sized school of mackerel went charging by the inlet Saturday and were gone by Sunday.

Lou Stalker at **Charvin Fishing Station** happily told us about what he felt was the best cod weekend so far of the year. Lou says bottom fishing was great out of Jones Inlet 140-160°, in 85-110' of water. Many boats with 1-3 men aboard had decent catches of 4-8 cod per boat, fish in the 25-45 lb. range. Hardly any fish were under 20 lbs. On Saturday, Bob Shane of Shane's Marine on his boat Sea Wolf decked 8 cod to 30 lbs. fishing with 3 pals, 140° out of Jones in 100' of water on open bottom. Sunday's unusual catch was for Ken, Len and Bill Giebfried with four cod, weights of 26, 28, 32 and 33½ lbs. taken in just 50' of water, 140° out of Jones Inlet. Allen and Bonnie Radi of the Freeport Tuna Club boated 3 cod weights 24, 28 and 31 lbs. in their small boat in roughly 80' of water. All these catches were on bait.

BELLMORE

Merrick Tackle reports that on the codfishing scene, 4 cod of 22, 27, 28, and 31½ lbs. were taken Saturday by Don and Scott Mains of Bellmore, fishing with Dick and Rich Camp of Miami. Action was 110' of water, 150° out of Jones on clam.

LONG BEACH

Long Beach Sports Marina said that boatmen have been making a killing on flounder at the cement block, across from the Long Beach High School. Worms have been taking the flatties which run from throwbacks up to 2 lbs. Jimmy Allen had a 2 lber. among the nice mess of fish he took from one of the marina's rental boats.

Scotty's Fishing Station reported very good flounder action at the Coast Guard Station, Buoy 14, and on the flats. The fish run from throwbacks up to the 1½ lber. weighed in by Nyla Amato. Worms are taking most of the fish. Andy Di Giovani and George Farber of the El George, fished open bottom in 80' of water, 120° out of Jones Inlet and returned with cod of 22 and 28 lbs. on Saturday.

ATLANTIC BEACH

Captain Ron Lepper of the charter boat **Kim** called to tell us that good catches of schoolie bass were made this past week through Sunday at Breezy Pt. and at the Tin Can area on umbrellas. A fair number of big stripers were caught during this same time period from Sandy Hook to Monmouth on spoons at the change of tide.

Leon at **Henning's Fishing Station** reported all the flounder you want at the concrete block and Duck Point. Bigger fish are found at the latter location. On Saturday, two anglers kept half of what they caught and still returned with over 60 flatties from ½ to ¾ lbs. Two to three pound blackfish plentiful at the bridges on green crabs. Boatmen have been running down to Mon mouth Beach and between the channels at Ambrose to score with stripers. On Saturday, Kenny Kelmenson of the Sea Jet, took a 30 lb. bass on a Lupo Baby Bunker Spoon from the Jersey Grounds.

SHEEPSHEAD BAY

Mike's Tackle reports blackfishing has been very good for the boats working blackfish, such as the **Pilot II**. Good catches of whiting and ling mixed at Scotland or the Mud Hole. Also, good night whiting catches being made on various open boats such as the **Amberjack V**.

The **Dorothy B** which has been fishing the Ambrose area, reports very good catches of whiting and ling for all fares.

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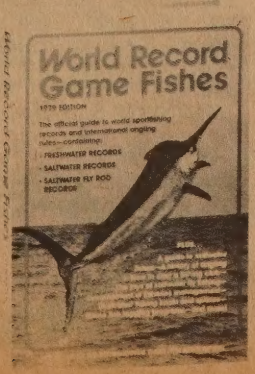

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Captain Tom on the **Pilot II** tells of excellent blackfishing at 17 Fathoms and at Seabright. Tommy says the catches are consistent. Fish are averaging 2-3 lbs., with a lot of 5 and 6 lbers. and the big guys are running up to 9½ lbs., all on green crab.

Amberjack V skipper Captain Jim Ardolino says that on his last offshore wreck trip Saturday, they had plenty of cod up to 40 lbs. and pollack up to 36 lbs. and also encountered a lot of doggies. The boat is now sailing whiting and ling everyday. See ad for details.

Captain Walt of the **Flamingo III** reports fair to good catches of whiting and ling for this week and weekend. Walt says catches are improving everyday and they are just starting to take off. The fish are moving in from the offshore depths and as the water cools off, catches will get better and better. Walt hopes for a repeat of last winter's super good catches.

STATEN ISLAND

Lenny at **Santo's Sport Shop** reported very few big stripers remain. Worm trollers have been doing a fair job with schoolies at the VZ Bridge and Hoffman and Swinburn Islands. Good flounder fishing at Great Kills Park and the Stapleton Piers. Most of the fish on the small side, however. Boatmen continue to take blackfish on clams and worms at the Great Kills Bug Light and Old Orchard Lighthouse.

PECONICS & GARDINERS
★ BEST BET ★
BLACKFISH

GREENPORT

A.P. White Bait Shop described the flounder fishing going on in Petty's Bight as great. Some of the fish run upwards of 2-3 lbs. Best baits are worms and clams.

SOUTHOLD

Bill at **Port of Egypt Fishing Station** was not only enthused about the excellent flounder action in Petty's Bight, but also with the super blackfishing in the area. A party of N.Y. Telephone Company employees led by a Mr. Neckleburg, had 20 blacks in the 6-10 lb. class among the catch they made out in front of the Orient Station. Hermit crabs, green crabs, and skimmers have all been productive. For the flounder, many of which are in the 1½ to 2 lb. class, Bill suggested using worms or clams.

NORTH SHORE MID-ISLAND
★ BEST BET ★
MIXED BAG

ROCKY POINT

Rocky Point Fishing Stop reported that flounder are still plentiful in Mt. Sinai Harbor, with the fish mixed in size. Worms and clams both account for decent scores. From what customers have said, it appears that most of the blackfish are gone from this area.

KINGS PARK

From **OK Bait Shop**, we learned that boatmen fishing worms inside the mouth of the river are taking mixed bags of flounder and tommy cod.

NORTHPORT

Tom at **Bowman's Sporting Goods** said that flounder are still available in good quantity inside the harbor for those using worm bait. Blackfish still strong two miles off the Eaton's Neck Coast Guard Station and some bass being trolled on umbrella rigs in the rips at Eaton's Neck.

HUNTINGTON

From **Ronnie's Bait and Tackle,** Bill passed along word that there's been some good flounder action near Target Rock. Some of the fish are running up to 1½ lbs., and both worms and clams have been producing decent scores. On Friday, one boatman trolled wire and umbrella rigs at Eaton's Neck and boated 25 stripers, of which only one was a keeper.

SURF REPORT
with Fred Golofaro

Well, it looks like we have come to the end of the line for 1979. Reports this week were almost non-existent despite the weatherman's promise of mild weather holding true. For all of my overzealous optimism, no late run of fish ever did materialize. Boy, did I take the apple on that one. All of the ingredients that provided good late season runs in years past were there, with one notable exception: no fish! There just weren't the numbers of fish around to provide a good fall run.

Just a few final tidbits before wrapping things up for the season. Richie Simmons and myself fished under the light at Montauk Thanksgiving Eve. Under less than ideal conditions, Richie did manage to arouse the interest of one striper. Unfortunately, the teen size fish came loose just as I was about to apply the coup de grace. That was the extent of the action for the night.

Thom, from Speck's Tackle Shop in Shinnecock, reported that all has been quiet along east end beaches. I did get word that fish cavorted under an escort of birds out of casting range at West End 2 and parking field 6 late last week. None of the fish, however, found their way into the suds.

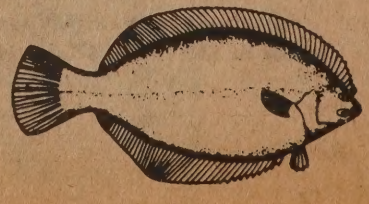
Down Staten Island way, still some school fish for worm fishermen at Penny's Beach, Cliff St., and Great Kills Park, according to Lenny from Santo's Sport Shop.

Along the North Shore, scattered rumors of a couple of small bass at Horton's Pt., Miller Place, and Caumsett last week. Tom from Bowman's Sporting Goods in Northport, said that casters have been taking stripers up to 24" on bucktails and Rebels at the Lilco power plant.

The Northport plant is the best bet for surf fishermen looking to stretch their season into the winter months. Light tackle is the choice here with small Rebels, RedFins, bucktails, Eelworms and tin the most productive lures. Northwest winds spread warm water currents east along the beach to Crab Meadow, sometimes negating a good hike to the outflow.

Again, I would like to say that any criticisms or comments that might help improve the column in 1980 are welcomed and appreciated. Address any correspondence to me, Fred Golofaro, c/o The Long Island Fisherman, P. O. Box 1994, Sag Harbor, New York 11963.

Hopefully, we will be able to encourage more reader participation next season. The best info comes from fishermen who are out pounding the beaches regularly. Maybe we can all help each other put more fish on the beach next year. Have a happy, healthy holiday season and keep in touch with the L. I. surf scene by following The Fisherman's informative Surf Side column.



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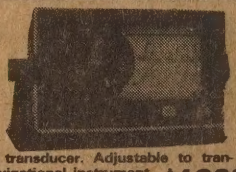

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